Full utilisation of runways at airport

*163. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:
SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:††

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Directorate General of Civil Aviation plans to maximize utilisation of runways at major airports around the country;

(b) if so, whether proper infrastructure is available at major airports to make utilization of runways;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) to what extent the major airports would be modernized to have full utilization of runways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (d) In order to make maximum use of runways, all the major airports are equipped with Navigational Aids *i.e.* Instrument Landing System (ILS), Distance Measuring Equipment (DME), Very High Frequency Omni Range (VOR), runway lightings, Approach Lighting System, RADAR, VHF frequencies. Advanced Surface Movement Guidance and Control System (ASMGCS) has been installed at Delhi airport and is being planned for Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata airport. Besides, Airports Authority of India (AAI) has initiated major development works for modernisation/upgradation of airports. These include construction of parallel taxi track and link taxiways to maximise the utilisation of runways as well as increasing the length of runway wherever required.

SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Sir, I am very happy to note that 40 per cent reservation for women is applied in the Question Hour because out of 20, eight questions are listed for them, and the first five plus thirty. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please go through the question and put supplementaries. No strain, please.

SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Unfortunately, the Minister has taken more than 35 minutes for that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please put the question.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: What is wrong in it?

SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: It is very good; I am very happy that the reservation policy is already applied in this House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please put the supplementary question.

SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister, who has, very briefly, given an answer, what is the number of flights which asked for landing, but were told to remain in the flying mode due to non-availability of landing runways or parking space, at Metro Airports-Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai, during July-December, 2007; what is the percentage of extra cost incurred on aviation fuel and pilot-cabin-crew deployment on such avoidable flying time; whether it is attributable to lack of infrastructure-air-traffic controllers, non-availability of runways. ...*(Interruptions)*...

††The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Vijay J. Darda.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What is the supplementary question? One question, please. You get two questions, Dardaji. Please ask them one by one.

SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Okay, Sir. Why departures of many flights are delayed even after boarding by passengers on an announcement made by the ground-handling staff giving the "Ready for Departure" signal?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, there are many parts of the question, but, I think, broadly speaking, what the hon. Member is referring to is the congestion which is prevailing at major airports in our country. And of course, there is no denying the fact that especially in Mumbai and Delhi, the two major airports which handle the maxium number of traffic, we are witnessing delays on account of both arrivals and departures. Sir, just to give a little idea of the kind of activity which has been taken place in the aviation, in 2004, Delhi used to handle, approximately, 300 plus flights a day, which has now gone up to almost 675 flights a day. And in Mumbai, the situation is no different. It was, approximately, 350 flights a day in 2004. Now, it is more than 725 or 750 flights a day. It just goes to show that the number of movements in the air has gone up and the corresponding infrastructure is yet to be developed to the levels which an handle this volume of traffic. That notwithstanding, we are all aware that the modernisation and upgradation process of all airports across the country is going on. Major airports, of course, are getting more, I would say, investments. The other small airports, in anticipation of future growth, are also being upgraded. But, at the same time, I would like to inform all the Members that while we are handling this growth, we are also very conscious of the fact that high growth and high traffic results in more pressure on the system. Safety, being of paramount concern, has also to be given due emphasis. All those parameters are being well addressed.

As regards the ATCs, I would like to inform that from 1999, for whatever reason, till 2004 we had a recruitment ban and, on the other, the requirement of ATCs went up. Since 2004 we have been constantly recruiting. Recruitment does not mean that it is the end of it. They have to be duly trained with the intention to handle the high volume of traffic safety. That is now being done. Apart from that, we have also gone beyond the handling of this additional traffic. Earlier, only one runway used to be used in Mumbai and Delhi. We don't have parallel runways as yet. But we are now using cross runway in Mumbai and the second runway in Delhi for a substantial period of time and as a result the capacity of the runways has increased. When I say that the number of movements almost doubled within a span of three years, it also naturally means that we have to take recourse to using the secondary runways to be able to handle this volume of traffic. Yes, there is traffic congestion. Maybe, it is phenomenon new to us in India. All over the world, I am sure, where most of us travelled, we do find congestion in major airports, though they have two, three or four runways. Ultimately, the pressure will be according to the volume of traffic and, especially at peak hours, in major airports all over the world congestion on the ground or in the air is quite a common feature. That doesn't mean that we should continue with the way it is. We have to, of course, upgrade our infrastructure. The Government is moving in that direction.

SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Sir, in my first question, I have asked about the fuel consumption which he has not replied to. ...*(Interruptions)*... Bagrodiaji has some objection. ...*(Interruptions)*... My next question is relating to security. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please put your question.

SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Are there checking at the counters, at the x-ray machines, emigration counters, customs counters, security counters, etc.? Are they in position as per

internationally acceptable standards? You must have notices security lapses on the runways, as well as, in the main buildings. Today anybody can buy a ticket for Rs. 30 and go with a passenger. As you know, they are not searched. Anybody can come, keep a bag, blow it and go. I have seen lack of security.

The second thing is this. Yesterday, you must have seen a report in the Press that one deer was found on the runway at Nagpur airport. There was a nilgai on the runway at Kanpur airport; there were some dogs on the runway at Mumbai airport. What kind of security are you having?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, as regards the earlier part of the question, fuel burnt, no accurate statistics are available as to how much is the fuel burnt on account of holding the flights in the air or on the ground. But, at the same time, we must accept that delays or holding flights in the air cause loss in terms of fuel burnt to airlines. It is a National loss. Nobody is denying that. But to give the accurate figures would not be probably, possible.

As regards the measures of security at airports, I think, we are all very sensitive to the issues of security, especially in the context of our own country, where we do face terrorism on an ongoing basis and across all States virtually. So, security of airports is a very important aspect. The Bureau of Civil Aviation Security has been given this responsibility. They act in accordance with the inputs which they get from the agencies from time to time. I am not saying that we have any fool-proof arrangement; I don't think that is anyway possible. At the same time, to the best of whatever is possible, I think the Indian airports are relatively manned in that fashion. I am sure if there is any issue which needs to be looked into, it will be addressed. And the concern, which the hon. Member has raised, will, of course, be given due attention. At the same time, you must also appreciate that the volume of traffic has increased; we had almost 95 million passengers this year. It is a very large number, and I am sure, it also puts that much pressure on the system. But we will address it. In terms of some stray incidents of deer going into the periphery, I think, the perimeter security, in our context, is becoming very important. And, it is not only the question of deer or nilgai; I am sure no animal or human being should be able to enter the airport periphery. That is why, in our future programme, perimeter security is a very important aspect. And, as I said earlier, in terms of security and other concerns, including terrorism and all other issues, we will be addressing the perimeter security. I would say, in a very, very hi-tech manner. Already specifications are being put in place so that perimeter security becomes absolutely fool-proof.

SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR: Sir, at the Tiruchirapalli airport, there is only one Airway which is functioning. The private airline, Air Deccan, had applied for permission to operate flights from Trichy-Chennai, Chennai-Trichy and from Bangalore-Trichy and Trichy-Bangalore. There are enough infrastructure facilities available; adequate runways are also there. Citing the reason that there are not enough security personnel available, they have not been given the permission. I would request the hon. Minister to look into this problem and settle the issue.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: I am not aware of this particular incident. But I do not see any reason that if an airline wishes to operate in any city, lack of security personnel could be the factor. Trichy is already an operational airport, and it has quite a few flights. It is not in isolation.

SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR: Presently, there is only one aircraft. This would help all the neighbouring districts of Tamil Nadu.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: I will resolve this issue.

SHRI R. SHUNMUGASUNDARAM: Sir, according to me, utilisation and modernisation of runway along will not help in handling the increasing number of flights and passenger movement in the country. To tell you what happened about three years back, an Air France cargo flight met with a fire accident on the runway at the Chennai airport. This blocked the operation for nearly two to three days. The flights could not be handled and all the domestic and international flights were taken to Bangalore. This is an example which the hon. Minister should keep in mind so that such incidents do not recur in future. As per his earlier statement to this hon. House, he has said that the tier-2 cities would be improved, and international connections from these cities will become operational. Hence this is our demand that you have to increase the number of flights operating from Tiruchirapalli. You should also have international flights from Madurai connecting Colombo and Singapore. If this happens, then, you can decongest the traffic at the Chennai airport.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, what I could gather from the hon. Member's statement is that we should encourage more infrastructure in level-II cities also.

SHRI R. SHUNMUGASUNDARAM: That would decongest the airport.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: That would decongest. Well, of course, I think the growth of aviation is not only happening in Mumbai and Delhi. I could not give you accurate statistics but, broadly speaking, the share of Mumbai and Delhi, only these two airports, *vis-a-vis* the total aviation traffic in the country in 2004 was almost as high as 65 per cent of the total. Now, that share has come down well under 50 per cent; it would be close to 40 per cent. It just shows that the traffic pattern in our country has changed. It is not only concentrated in Mumbai and Delhi but other cities also. In fact, in 2004, there were 50 operational airports in the country which received commercial flights. That number has gone up to almost 82. So, it is a conscious effort of the Government. Besides this, we have also encouraged regional airlines as a concept because we never had a regional airlines permit. We only used to have national operators permit; now, we have a regional operators permit. That also gets incentives; landing and parking fees are waived for 80-seater and below aircraft. The hon. Finance Minister has already declared goods status to fuel for aircraft below 80 seats and that, in a way, will promote regional connectivity exactly on the lines that you are saying. Again, it s a demand-supply situation. As airports are available, airlines are available, naturally they would try to find markets where they would get passengers.

श्री महेन्द्र मोहन: सभापति महोदय, धन्यवाद। मैं माननीय मंत्री महोदय से यह जानना चाहूंगा कि कानपुर में जो नील गाय वाली घटना हुई थी, उसके बाद वहां पर क्या आदेश दिए गए हैं? कानपुर एअरपोर्ट पर 47 पैसेन्जर्स मरते-मरते बचे थे। चूंकि वह डिफैंस एअरपोर्ट है, इसलिए अब वहां पर क्या व्यवस्था कराई गई है?

दूसरा मैं यह भी जानना चाहता हूं कि क्या वह कानपुर की कनैक्टिविटी और बढ़ा रहे हैं? वहां का एअरपोर्ट खाली रहता है और पैसेन्जर्स को फ्लाइट्स नहीं मिलती हैं।

वहां पर जो नील गाय थीं, क्या डिफैंस को उन्हें मारने के आदेश दिए गए हैं और वहां की सुरक्षा बढ़ाई गई है अथवा नहीं, इसके बारे में मैं जानना चाहता हूं?

श्री प्रफुल्ल पटेल: माननीय सदस्य ठीक कह रहे हैं। वहां पर जो दुर्घटना हुई थी, वह बहुत दुर्भाग्यपूर्ण थी। चूंकि कानपुर का हवाई अड्डा एअरफोर्स का है इसलिए हमने डिफैंस मिनिस्ट्री और इंडियन एअरफोर्स, दोनों को वहां का

पूरा पैरीमीटर सुरक्षित रखने के लिए काफी हिमायत दी है कि इस मामले में उन्हें ध्यान रखना चाहिए, ताकि ऐसी दुर्घटना फिर से न हो। अभी तो ऊपर वाले की कृपा रही कि कोई दुर्घटना नहीं हुई, हालांकि हादसा हो सकता था, क्योंकि हवाई जहाज नील गाय से टकरा गया था, जिससे नील गाय की भी मौत हो गई थी। नील गाय काफी बड़ा जानवर होता है। ऐसी दुर्घटना भविष्य में नहीं होनी चाहिए।

दूसरा, आपका जो प्रश्न है, कम-से-कम उसमें मैं आपकी थोड़ी बहुत तारीफ भी करूंगा, क्योंकि कानपुर में विशेषकर आपने भी लगातार इसके लिए मांग की और बहुत सालों के बाद पहली बार कानपुर को हवाई सेवाओं के साथ जोड़ा गया। अभी तो उसकी शुरूआत ही हुई है। निश्चित ही वह बहुत बड़ा शहर है और उसको ...(**व्यवधान**)...

श्री महेन्द्र मोहन: नहीं, नहीं, बधाई के पात्र आप भी हैं। लेकिन मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि नील गायों को मारने के आदेश दिए गए हैं या नहीं दिए गए?

श्री प्रफुल्ल पटेल: देखिए, वह मेरा विषय नहीं है, वह इंडियन एअरफोर्स का क्षेत्र है। मैं सिर्फ उनको निवेदन कर सकता हूं या हिमायत दे सकता हूं कि ऐसी दुर्घटना नहीं होनी चाहिए, वरना कम-से-कम हमारी जो कॉमर्शियल फ्लाइट्स हैं हम उनको असुरक्षित हवाई अड्डे पर उतारने के लिए परमिशन नहीं देंगे।

सरकारी-क्षेत्र के बैंकों के विलय संबंधी समिति

164. **सुश्री अनुसुइया उइके:** क्या वित्त मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार द्वारा सरकारी-क्षेत्र के बैंकों के विलय के लिए सुझाव देने हेतु किसी समिति का गठन किया गया था;

(ख) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है;

(ग) क्या समिति द्वारा अपनी रिपोर्ट सरकार को प्रस्तुत कर दी गई है;

(घ) यदि हां, तो उक्त रिपोर्ट कब प्रस्तुत की गई थी;

(ङ) इस रिपोर्ट के आधार पर कौन-कौन से बैंक विलय के लिए प्रस्तावित हैं तथा इस विलय के क्या कारण हैं; और

(च) विलय की प्रक्रिया कब तक पूर्ण कर ली जाएगी और इसके क्या लाभ होंगे?

वित्त मंत्री (श्री पी॰ चिदम्बरम): (क) से (च) एक विवरण राज्य सभा के पटल पर रख दिया गया है।

(क) से (घ) सरकार ने अगस्त 1991 में वित्तीय व्यवस्था ढांचा, संगठन कार्यों तथा पद्धति से संबंधित सभी पहलुओं की जांच के लिए श्री एम॰ नरसिम्हन की अध्यक्षता में वित्तीय व्यवस्था संबंधी एक उच्च स्तरीय समिति का गठन किया था। समिति ने नवम्बर 1991 में, अपनी रिपोर्ट सरकार को प्रस्तुत कर दी थी। सरकार ने श्री नरसिम्हन समिति द्वारा पहले प्रस्तुत रिपोर्ट में वित्तीय पद्धति सुधार के लिए की गई सिफारिश के कार्यान्वयन के रिकार्ड की समीक्षा करने तथा आगामी वर्षों में आवश्यक सुधारों की रूपरेखा तैयार करने के लिए बैंकिंग क्षेत्र में सुधार पर श्री एम॰ नरसिम्हन की अध्यक्षता में दिसम्बर 1997 में एक और उच्च स्तरीय समिति का गठन किया ताकि भारतीय बैंकिंग क्षेत्र और अधिक सुदृढ़ एवं बेहतर हो सके तथा अंतर्राष्ट्रीय आर्थिक परिवेश में तेजी से हो रहे परिवर्तनों का सामना प्रभावी रूप से किया जा सके। बैंकिंग क्षेत्र में सुधार पर दूसरी समिति ने भी अपनी रिपोर्ट अप्रैल 1998 में सरकार को प्रस्तुत कर दी थी। बैंकिंग क्षेत्र में सुधार पर समिति (नरसिम्हन समिति) ने, अन्य बातों के साथ, वित्तीय क्षेत्र के व्यापक सुधार के भाग के रूप में बैंकिंग क्षेत्र में समेकन की सिफारिश की थी।

(ङ) और (च) सरकार का यह मत है कि एक सरकारी क्षेत्र के एक बैंक का सरकारी क्षेत्र के किसी दूसरी बैंक के साथ विलयन आदि द्वारा समेकन के संबंध में कोई प्रस्ताव संबंधित बैंक से आना चाहिए, जिसमें सरकारी